

REMARKS

The present application was filed on November 16, 2001, as a divisional of parent application Serial No. 08/923,301, which was filed September 4, 1997 and issued March 19, 2002 as U.S. Patent No. 6,359,899. The present application was originally filed with claims 1-28, and claims 13, 14, 27 and 28 were canceled in a transmittal letter filed with the present application. Claims 1-12 and 15-26 were pending in the present application prior to the amendments made herein.

In the September 28, 2005 Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,872,769 ("Caldara"), allowed claims 8-12 and 22-26, and indicated that claims 6, 7, 20 and 21 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In this response, Applicants respectfully traverse the §102(a) rejection, cancel claims 1-3 and 15-17 without prejudice, rewrite claims 6 and 20 in independent form, and adjust the dependencies of claims 4, 5, 18 and 19. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

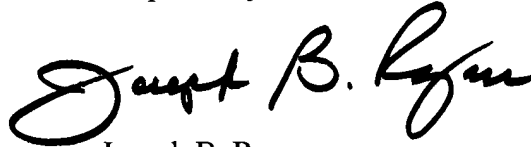
With regard to the §102(a) rejection, Applicants initially note that MPEP §2131 specifies that a given claim is anticipated "only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference," citing Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Moreover, MPEP §2131 indicates that the cited reference must show the "identical invention . . . in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim," citing Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Applicants respectfully submit that the Caldera reference fails to teach or suggest each and every limitation of claims 1-5 and 15-19.

Notwithstanding the traversal, claims 1-3 and 15-17 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 6 and 20 have been rewritten in independent form, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application.

Dependent claims 4 and 5 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 6 rather than from canceled claim 3. Similarly, dependent claims 18 and 19 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 20 rather than from canceled claim 17.

Applicants believe that claims 4-12 and 18-26 are in condition for allowance, and such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph B. Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" being more prominent and the last name "Ryan" following in a similar style.

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Joseph B. Ryan
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Reg. No. 37,922
Ryan, Mason & Lewis, LLP
90 Forest Avenue
Locust Valley, NY 11560
(516) 759-7517